



Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Program

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

Objectives:

- To encourage, motivate, and assist Executive agencies to include the environment as a factor in their purchasing decisions along with price and performance.
- To provide guidance to procurement officials on how to procure environmentally preferable products and services that have lesser or reduced effects on human health and the environment when compared to others that serve the same purpose.

The federal government is the single largest U.S. consumer, purchasing more than \$200 billion worth of goods and services a year.

Background:

President Clinton's 1993 Executive Order 12873 on Federal Acquisition, Recycling, and Waste Prevention required EPA "to issue guidance that recommends principles that Executive Agencies should use in making determinations for the preference and purchase of environmentally preferable products." EPA's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) Program was established to issue such guidance and to serve as a point of contact for government agencies. On August 22, 1997, EPP became part of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). The FAR revisions require federal agencies to "implement cost-effective contracting preference programs favoring the acquisition of environmentally preferable and energy-efficient products and services."

Guidance on Environmentally Preferable Purchasing:

EPA identified seven guiding principles to help Executive agencies incorporate environmental preferability into their procurement practices. The following principles were proposed in the *Federal Register* (FR) in EPA's "Guidance on Acquisition of Environmentally Preferable Products and Services" (60 FR 50722):

Purchasing decisions can greatly influence the goods and services provided by the marketplace.

1. Consideration of environmental preferability should begin early in the acquisition process and be rooted in the ethic of pollution prevention, which strives to eliminate or reduce, up front, potential risks to human health and the environment.
2. A product's or service's environmental preferability is a function of multiple attributes.
3. Environmental preferability should reflect the lifecycle considerations of products and services to the extent feasible.
4. Environmental preferability should consider the scale (global versus local) and temporal reversibility aspects of a product's or service's impact.
5. Environmental preferability should be tailored to local conditions where appropriate.
6. The environmental objectives of products or services should be a factor or subfactor in competition among vendors, when appropriate.
7. Agencies need to examine product attribute claims carefully.



Environment + Price + Performance = EPP

Pilot Projects:

Agencies are gaining practical experience in purchasing environmentally preferable products and services by applying the above principles to a specific product or service acquisition. Pilot projects generate more detailed information. Executive agencies are encouraged to participate in pilot projects or provide examples of EPP practices; this information will be shared with other agencies to avoid duplication of effort.

Selected Accomplishments to Date:

- ✓ U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) and EPA Cleaning Products Pilot Project.
- ✓ U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and EPA Parking Lot Renovation Pilot Project.
- ✓ Federal Green Purchasing Symposium for federal agencies and the private sector to examine EPP issues and barriers in the federal marketplace.

Projects Underway:

- DOD and EPA Interior Renovation Pilot Project for the Pentagon.
- GSA and EPA Paints Pilot Project.
- Compilation of sample EPP contract language to be used in federal procurement practices.
- "Greening Uncle Sam" interactive procurement tool to provide federal procurement officials with EPP background and information.
- "Pioneers in EPP" initiative to identify current EPP activities and initiate pilot projects within federal agencies.
- Green Conferences tool kit to provide Executive agencies with EPP information to utilize during conference coordinating.
- An examination of EPP practices in the private sector.

Available Case Studies:

- *Cleaning Products Pilot Project* (EPA742-R-97-002).
- *Leading by Example: Two Case Studies Documenting How the Environmental Protection Agency Incorporated Environmental Features into New Buildings* (EPA742-R-97-006).
- *Paving the Road to Success—The Department of Defense's Parking Lot Repair and Maintenance Contract: An Environmentally Preferable Case Study* (EPA742-R-97-007).
- *A Study of State and Local Government Practices That Consider Environmental Performance of Goods and Services* (EPA742-R-96-007).
- *The City of Santa Monica's Environmental Purchasing: A Case Study* (EPA742-R-98-001).
- *Green Spending: A Case Study of the State of Massachusetts' Environmental Purchasing* (EPA742-R-98-002). (To be published mid-1998.)

For more information on the EPP Program or to order publications, contact:

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